

REMARKS

The Office Action dated September 11, 2006, has been received and carefully noted. The above amendments to the claims, and the following remarks, are submitted as a full and complete response thereto.

Claims 4, 5, 7, 16, 17, and 19 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 1, 2, 6, 8, 12-15, 18, 20, 22-24, 26, and 29-33 have been amended to more particularly point out a distinctive claim of the subject matter of the invention. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-3, 6, 8-15, 18, and 20-33 are respectfully submitted for consideration.

Claims 1 and 33 were objected to for minor informalities. The above amendments to the claims address these minor informalities, and place the claims in compliance with the United States patent practice.

The following prior art rejections were made in the outstanding Office Action;

1) Claims 1-2, 7-8, 12-14, 19-20, 29-30, and 33 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being unpatentable over US Patent Publication No. 2002/0168978 to *Molnar*;

2) Claims 5, 6, 17, and 18 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over *Molnar* and US Patent No. 5,678,179 to *Turcotte*;

3) Claims 3, 15, and 31 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over *Molnar* in view of US Patent Publication No. 2003/0083078 to *Allison*;

4) Claims 9 and 21 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over *Molnar* in view of US Patent Publication No.2004/0123097 to *Ranjan*;

5) Claims 10, 11, 22-26, and 32 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over *Molnar* in view of US Patent Publication No. 2003/0196098 to *Dickenson*;

6) Claim 27 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over *Molnar* in view of US Patent Publication No. 2004/0203947 to *Moles*; and

7) Claim 28 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over *Molnar* in view of US Patent Publication No. 2001/0052687 to *Sivula*.

As will be discussed below, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited combinations of prior art fail to disclose or suggest the claimed invention. In particular, significant distinctions exist between the claimed invention and the primary reference of *Molnar*, as will be discussed below. The secondary references fail to cure the significant deficiencies which exist in *Molnar*.

Independent claim 1, upon which 2, 3, 6, and 8-10 are dependent, is directed to a method for controlling sending of messages in a communication system. The method comprises providing a network entity with restriction information associated with terminating parties in the communication system. At least one terminating party is determined for a message to be sent, and restriction information associated with the terminating parties is defined to comprise a restriction level for sending the message to at

least one terminating party. The terminating parties are classified into a plurality of restriction levels. Sending of the message based on the restriction information is controlled, and the restriction level defines a type of message which can be received by the at least one terminating party.

Independent claim 12 is directed to a computer program comprising program code embodied on a computer readable media. The program controls a computer to perform a method similar to the method recited in claim 1.

Independent claim 13, upon which claims 14, 15, 18, and 20-28 are dependent, is directed to a communication system. The system comprises a network entity configured to receive and manage restriction information associated with terminating parties in the communication system. A determining unit is configured to determine at least one terminating party for a message to be sent. A controlling unit is configured to control sending of the message based on the restriction information. The restriction information comprises a restriction level for sending the message to the at least one terminating party. The terminating parties are classified into a plurality of restriction levels, and the restriction level defines a type of message which the terminating party can receive.

Independent claim 29, upon which claims 30-32 are dependent, is directed to a communication system comprising a network entity, a determining means and a controlling means. The determining means and controlling means determine at least one terminating party, and control sending of a message based upon restriction information.

The restriction information comprises a restriction level, and the restriction level defines a type of message which can be received by the terminating party.

Independent claim 33 is directed to a network entity which is configured to receive and manage restriction information associated with terminating parties in a communication system. The entity is also configured to determine at least one terminating party for a message to be sent and to control sending of the message based on the restriction information. Restriction information comprises a restriction level for sending the message to the at least one terminating party. The terminating parties are classified into a plurality of restriction levels, and the restriction level defines a type of message which can be received by the terminating party.

As a result of the claimed configurations of the invention, sending of messages can be controlled based upon a predetermined restriction level, and therefore prevent sending potentially sensitive data to an unwanted recipient. It is respectfully submitted that none of the cited prior art discloses or suggests the elements of the claimed invention.

Molnar discloses a method for restriction of a message service. In *Molnar*, as illustrated for example in Figures 2 and 3, subscribers (illustrated as home subscriber 12 or visitor subscriber 13) can be involved in message transmission within a mobile network. A decision means 26 and an analyzing means 27 checks whether a particular address for a destination of a message is an allowed address or an unallowed address. If a

subscriber is determined to be an unallowed address by a Visiting Switching Center, then the message is not allowed to be sent to the desired destination.

The present invention, however, is significantly different than *Molnar* in that the present invention is not directed to allowed/unrestricted and unallowed/restricted addresses. On the contrary, the present invention is directed to methods, apparatuses, and systems wherein terminating parties have restriction information in the form of one of a plurality of restriction levels associated therewith. Messages are permitted to be sent to various terminating parties based upon a restriction level of the terminating parties. If the message is sought to be sent to a terminating party that does not have an appropriate restriction level, the sending of the message is controlled.

As discussed above, *Molnar* does not utilize restriction information and restriction levels. *Molnar* is merely directed to a method and system which can determine whether an address is allowed or unallowed. There is no disclosure nor suggestion in *Molnar* of defining restriction information associated with terminating parties, nor is there any disclosure of suggestion of any restriction level which can be defined within the terminating parties, and whether controlled sending of messages occurs based upon a plurality of restriction levels.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections based upon *Molnar* be withdrawn.

With respect to the obviousness rejections of claims 5, 6, 17, and 18 over *Molnar*, in view of *Turcotte*, Applicants respectfully submit that *Turcotte* fails to cure the significant deficiencies which exist in *Molnar*.

Turcotte discloses a message transmission system and method for a radio communication system. As discussed above, with respect to *Molnar*, *Turcotte* fails to disclose or suggest any method or apparatus which discloses or suggests a step for a device which is capable of defining restriction information associated with terminating parties to employ a plurality of restriction levels, and therefore *Turcotte* viewed alone or *Turcotte* combined with *Molnar* fails to disclose or suggest elements of any of the presently pending claims.

With respect to the rejections of claims 3, 15, and 31 over combination of *Molnar* and *Allison*, Applicants respectfully submit that *Allison* fails to cure the significant deficiencies which exist in *Molnar*, as discussed above. A combination of *Molnar* and *Allison* fails to disclose or suggest any method or apparatus which utilizes a step or device which is capable of defining restriction incrimination associated with terminating parties to employ a plurality restriction levels. Therefore, *Allison* when viewed alone, or *Allison* combined with *Molnar* fails to disclose or suggest elements of any of the presently pending claims.

In order to avoid repetition, Applicants respectfully submit that the other secondary references of *Ranjan*, *Dickinson*, *Moles*, and *Sivula* suffer from the same

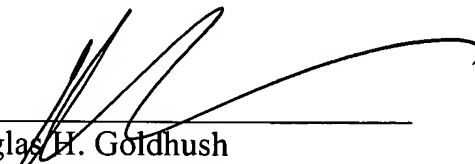
deficiencies as the rejections which utilize *Turcotte* and *Allison*. None of these secondary references cure the significant deficiency which exists in *Molnar*. In particular, none of the cited prior art discloses or suggests any methods or systems which can define restriction information to comprise a restriction level of a plurality of restriction levels for sending a message to at least one terminating party, and which controls sending of a message based upon this plurality of restriction levels.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that each of presently pending claims 1-3, 6, 8-15, 18, and 20-33 recite subject matter which is neither disclosed nor suggested in the cited prior art. Applicants submit that this subject matter is more than sufficient to render the claimed invention unobvious to a person skilled in the art. Applicants therefore respectfully request that these claims be found allowable, and this application passed to issue.

If for any reason the Examiner determines that the application is not now in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact, by telephone, the applicants' undersigned attorney at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this application.

In the event this paper is not being timely filed, the applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension together with any additional fees may be charged to Counsel's Deposit Account 50-2222.

Respectfully submitted,



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